

Appl. No.: 09/478,112
Amdt. dated: December 16, 2003
Reply to Office action of June 17, 2003

Patent
Attorney Docket: EPI-027 US
7008122001

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 10-11, 16-18, 21, 23, 25 and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 based on U.S. Patent No. 6,233,576 issued to Lewis ("Lewis") in view of EP No. 0 447 339 A2 by Janis ("Janis"). Claims 6-9 and 19-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 based on Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,178,505 issued to Schneider et al. ("Schneider"). Claims 13-15, 24 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 based on Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,173,939 issued to Abadi et al. ("Abadi").

Lewis discloses:

Provided is a scheme for implementing flexible control of subject authorizations (i.e. the authorizations which users or processes have) to perform operations in relation to computer resources. The methods, computer systems and authorization facilities which are provided by the invention enhance the security provisions of operating systems which have only very limited authorization facilities, by mapping the available operating system permissions to specified resource authorities for each of a set of aspects or characteristics of a computer system resource. Thus, the standard operating system permissions (e.g. read, write, execute) can have different meanings for different resource aspects, and an individual subject can have separate authorization levels set for the different resource aspects. The mappings between authorities and the available permissions may be different for different types of resources. The invention provides great flexibility in setting the authorizations that a subject may have in relation to particular resources.

(Abstract). Lewis does not disclose "creating a client profile for at least one of the clients based on the preference information and the permission information associated with the client" as recited in claim 1 as amended. Lewis also does not disclose "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Janis discloses:

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Next, block 76 illustrates a query by the resource manager to one or more Reference Monitor applications which may exist within the distributed data processing system to determine whether or not an access control profile exists for the resource object or user in question. Block 78 then illustrates the logging of this access attempt at the Reference Monitor application. Such logging shall preferably include the storage of an identification of the particular user, the selected resource object and the stated intent of the user with regard to that particular resource object. Next, block 80 depicts the retrieval of the appropriate access control profile for the particular user or object in question. Block 82 then illustrates a determination of whether or not access to the selected resource object is permitted, in accordance with the information contained within the retrieved profile.

(Column 7, lines 1-17). Janis does not disclose "creating a client profile for at least one of the clients based on the preference information and the permission information associated with the client" as recited in claim 1 as amended. Janis also does not disclose "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Even if Lewis and Janis were combined, the combination would neither teach nor suggest "creating a client profile for at least one of the clients based on the preference information and the permission information associated with the client" as recited in claim 1 as amended. The combination also would neither teach nor suggest "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Therefore, applicants submit that claim 1 as amended is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis. Given that claims 2-11 and 13-15 depend from claim 1 as amended, applicants submit that these claims are also patentable over Lewis in view of Janis.

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Claim 16 as amended recites "creating a client profile for at least one of the clients based on the preference information and the permission information associated with the client" and "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" which are neither disclosed nor suggested by Lewis and Janis, alone or in combination. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 16 as amended is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis.

Claim 17 as amended recites "means for creating a user profile for each of the users, based on the preference information and the permission information associated with the user," and "means for managing relationships between users via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the users," which are neither disclosed nor suggested by Lewis and Janis, alone or in combination. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 17 as amended is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis.

Claim 18 as amended recites "storage means containing user profiles for each of the users, said user profile of each user comprising preference information reflecting one or more preferences of the user with respect to at least one of the digital facilities, access information regarding the power of the user to access at least one of the digital facilities and grant information regarding the power of the user to grant a permission to another user with respect to at least one of the digital facilities," which is neither disclosed nor suggested by Lewis and Janis, alone or in combination. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 18 as amended is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis.

Lewis and Janis, alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest "defining relationships between users based on the user profiles," and "enabling a user who has the

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permission to do so, to manage relationships associated with the user by altering the profile for the user," as recited in claim 21 as amended. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 21 as amended is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis. Given that claims 23 and 25 depend from claim 21 as amended, applicants submit that these claims are also patentable over Lewis in view of Janis.

Lewis and Janis, alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest "defining relationships between users based on the user profiles," and "automatically making a user who creates a user profile for another user or for a company a relationship manager of the other user or the company," as recited in claim 27 as amended. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 27 as amended is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis.

Claims 6-9 and 19-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 based on Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,178,505 issued to Schneider et al.

Lewis and Janis, alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Schneider discloses:

For example, an employee who has a portable computer that is connected to internet 111 has the necessary encryption and authentication capabilities can use the virtual private network to securely retrieve data from a computer system in one of the internal networks.

(Column 4, lines 58-62). Schneider does not disclose "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

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Even if Lewis, Janis, and Schneider were combined, the combination would neither teach nor suggest "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Therefore, applicants submit that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of Schneider. Given that claims 6-9 depend from claim 1, as amended, applicants submit that these claims are also patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of Schneider.

Claim 19 stands rejected based on Lewis in view of Janis and Schneider. Lewis, Janis, and Schneider, alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest "automatically allowing the first individual to manage one or more relationships of the second individual with other individuals, via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility, with the individual profile of the second individual" as recited in claim 19 as amended. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 19, as amended, is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and Schneider.

Claim 20 stands rejected based on Lewis in view of Janis and Schneider. Lewis, Janis, and Schneider, alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest "automatically making the user who creates the user profile for the other user a relationship manager of the other user with the profile of the other user" as recited in claim 20 as amended. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 20, as amended, is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and Schneider.

Claims 13-15, 24 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 based on Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,173,939 issued to Abadi et al. ("Abadi").

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Lewis and Janis, alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Abadi discloses:

A distributed computer system has a number of computers coupled thereto at distinct nodes and a naming service with a membership table that defines a list of assumptions concerning which principals in the system are stronger than other principals, and which roles adopted by principals are stronger than other roles. Each object in the system has an access control list (ACL) having a list of entries. Each entry is either a simple principal or a compound principal.

(Abstract). Abadi does not disclose "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Even if Lewis, Janis, and Abadi were combined, the combination would neither teach nor suggest "managing relationships between clients via the electronic communication medium with respect to the digital facility based on the profiles of the clients" as recited in claim 1 as amended.

Therefore, applicants submit that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of Abadi. Given that claims 13-15 depend from claim 1 as amended, applicants submit that these claims are also patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and further in view of Abadi.

Claims 24 and 26 stand rejected based on Lewis in view of Janis and Abadi. Lewis, Janis, and Abadi, alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest "defining relationships between users based on the user profiles," and "enabling a user who has the permission to do so,

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to manage relationships associated with the user by altering the profile for the user," as recited in claim 21 as amended. Therefore, applicants submit that claim 21, as amended, is patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and Abadi. Given that claims 24 and 26 depend from claim 21 as amended, applicants submit that these claims are also patentable over Lewis in view of Janis and Abadi.

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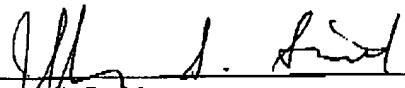
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CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above remarks, reconsideration and allowance of the claims is believed to be warranted and such action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or comments, the Examiner is respectfully urged to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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